THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has set up an Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) as a not-for-profit-Trust in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The objective of the Centre is to promote overseas Indian investments in India, facilitating Business-to-Business partnerships between Indian Business and overseas Indians and extend advisory services to PIO's and NRI's on various issues such as Consular questions, stay in India, financial issues, etc. The Centre functions from Delhi only. The OIFC has received 65 applications since it was launched in May, 2007. Since the OIFC functions exclusively for the benefit of overseas Indian community, there is no clash of interest with the programmes of Ministry of Commerce and Industry in promoting foreign investments in the country.

Programme for emigrant workers

2538. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a national skill upgradation and pre-departure orientation training programme for emigrant workers was launched in partnership with the States;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the number of States participating in this programme;

(d) whether Government would involve some industrial houses and private institutes to make this programme successful; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (e) A Scheme titled 'Skill upgradation and pre-departure orientation of emigrant workers' was drawn up by this Ministry during 2006-07 and the Scheme was implemented on a pilot basis involving 5 State Governments, *viz.* Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Punjab. During 2007-08, the Ministry intends to enlarge the Scheme in partnership with Ministry of Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises, apex Industry Associations and reputed Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) under Public-Private partnership.

Women deserted by overseas husbands

2539. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to provide aid to women who are deserted by their overseas husbands;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and